

THE MEANING OF THE NAME GRIPOSIA.—Mr J. L. Campbell asks (*antea*: 296) for the meaning of this generic name in the Noctuidae. However, he has really answered his own question when he remarks that it appears to be only an anagram of *Agriopis*—a name that has been in use for very many years, I believe. Now in general an anagram, being nothing but a rearrangement of the letters of the original, can *ipso facto* have no etymological (as distinct from entomological) meaning; though just occasionally an author has succeeded, either by ingenuity or by a happy accident, in creating a *meaningful* anagram at least as suitable as the original name! *Agriopis*, like most names of genera, is taken from the Greek or made up of Greek elements, and signifies 'wild-eyed' or 'of savage aspect.' But as to why this should be specially appropriate to our handsome 'Merveille du Jour' and its exotic allies, Mr Campbell's guess is as good as mine! Possibly something in the fore-wing markings may have suggested to an imaginative person the likeness of a grotesque face; or is the allusion rather to the moth's actual 'face' seen from the front? In any case, the choice of many names in entomology is highly fanciful, often even entirely arbitrary.—A. A. ALLEN, 63 Blackheath Park, S.E.3. 26.xi.70.

NEPTICULID COCOONS: THEIR GREGARIOUS NATURE.—I have in previous years observed but not remarked upon the gregarious nature of these cocoons when produced in captivity. This autumn, having given more attention than before to the collecting and studying of the Nepticulid larvae, this curious habit was particularly noticeable among those species that I had collected in numbers (*Nepticula viscarella* Stt., *N. myrtillella* Stt., *N. betulicola* Stt./*N. luteella* Stt., *Stigmella poterii* Stt., etc.).

Although Nepticulid larvae live solitarily as leaf-miners, if a number of tenanted leaves be collected and placed together in a box one on top of another, many of the resulting cocoons will be found formed gregariously between certain leaves without any apparent reason for this preference. All breeders of Nepticulidae must be familiar with this behaviour, yet I cannot recall having ever read or heard of any suggested explanation to account for it. Perhaps our specialists in this group—Mr Jacobs, Col. Emmet and Mr S. C. S. Brown—would be so kind as to favour us with their views on this subject? — J. M. CHALMERS-HUNT. 30.xi.1970.

[I certainly have noticed this tendency, and many years ago exhibited a group of eight or so cocoons of *Nepticula aurella* Stt. in the centre of a three inch glass topped box. At the time I offered the suggestion that this might be in order to facilitate mating when the insects hatched, but Dr Cockayne stated that such foresight could not possibly be attributed to these moths, and that the explanation was probably that they selected the spot which offered the best micro-climate, particularly as regards humidity.—Ed.].